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HEADLINE: Prosecutors Subpoena Array of Senator's Records

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BODY:

Federal prosecutors cast a remarkably wide net yesterday in their investigation of state Sen. Ulysses Currie, issuing a subpoena for virtually every document -- as well as computers and computer files -- maintained by the Prince George's County Democrat, his staff and the powerful committee that he chairs.

The grand jury subpoena, served on Maryland legislative staff at the direction of the U.S. attorney's office, is so broad that it offers few additional clues as to where prosecutors may be headed in a probe that came to light last week with FBI raids of Currie's home and the offices of a supermarket chain for which Currie has served as a consultant.

In the subpoena, prosecutors ask for all documentation of Currie's legislative activities, his notes, his appointments, address books and financial records, as well as documentation of his consulting, volunteer and recruiting activities "with any entity."

Prosecutors are also asking that by June 11 legislative staff turn over all computers and computer files used by Currie and his staff, as well as all documents maintained by the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, its subcommittees and staff.

The budget panel that Currie chairs is one of four standing committees in the Senate and arguably its most

influential, overseeing the state's \$31 billion annual budget.

The FBI raided Currie's home and the Lanham corporate headquarters of Shoppers Food and Pharmacy on Thursday. A spokeswoman for Supervalu, Shoppers' corporate parent, has confirmed Currie has served as a consultant for the company.

He has not reported receiving income from the company on financial disclosure forms filed with the State Ethics Commission. In 2005, he voted for a bill that facilitated the transfer of a liquor license from one Shoppers store to another without filing a "disclaimer statement" to indicate he might have the appearance of a conflict. Shoppers has not disclosed the dates of Currie's consulting relationship.

Meanwhile, a former Metro board member and a Prince George's County Council member both said Currie initiated conversations with them in recent years about the possibility that Shoppers might buy surplus Metro land at West Hyattsville Station for a grocery store.

Charles Deegan, who served on the board until April 2007, said Currie called him about two years ago to suggest a deal in which part of the surplus Metro land would be converted into soccer fields and trails and part into a Shoppers Food Warehouse.

Deegan was not aware at the time, he said, of any possible tie between Currie and Shoppers.

"He was a state senator, and he's head of the budget committee," Deegan said. "When a guy like that calls, you say, 'Yes, sir.' "

County Council member William A. Campos (D-Hyattsville), who represents the area, said the first time he heard of the proposal was in a phone call from Currie.

Campos said he, too, knew of no link between the senator and the company but believes that Currie had no malicious intent and instead promoted the idea to spur economic development.

Currie's attorney, Dale Kelberman, declined to comment on the investigation, as did Special Agent and FBI spokesman Rich Wolf and Supervalu spokeswoman Haley M. Meyer.

Shoppers now leases space in a shopping center that adjoins the Metro land and was interested in building a larger store on the land.

Metro does not sell land to private entities without a competitive bidding process. According to written summaries of four Metro meetings held from June 2006 to October 2007, discussions centered first on the idea that the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission might buy the land. Next emerged the idea that the Prince George's Redevelopment Authority could buy the land, selling one piece to Park and Planning for fields and another piece to a shopping center owner for development as a Shoppers.

The minutes indicate that Currie participated in three meetings in 2006 and 2007. At a June 2006 meeting, they show Currie offered to set up a meeting with Park and Planning.

Sen. Gwendolyn T. Britt (D-Prince George's), who represented the area until her death in January, also attended one meeting, as did the owners and managers of the Hyattsville shopping center where the supermarket is now located.

In a brief interview, Seymour Zuckerman, an official with Vanguard Realty, which manages the shopping center, said Currie played a "very minor role in the entire thing."

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